REMARKS

Applicant has canceled claims 1-10, and therefore the objection and rejections addressing those claims are now moot.

It is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claims 11 through 23 under Section 103 is not warranted. Parrish shows an assembly for mounting a closed face steering wheel onto a shaft. Kraft and Broughton, however, show the mounting of open-faced steering wheels onto a shaft, such that the open face of the steering wheel would need to be covered or capped in some manner in order to improve the aesthetics of the device. Such covering provides pathways for water or other liquids to contact the mounting assembly, which is undesirable due to possible rust and corrosion effects. The use of a closed face steering wheel precludes these negatives. Therefore, application of the Kraft and Broughton disclosures to the device of Parrish is severely limited because the inherent structures are distinct, non-related mounting assemblies.

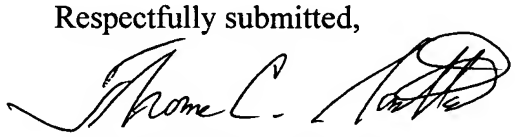
Independent claims 11 and 18 require specific assemblies that address the difficulty of mounting a closed faced steering wheels. In the Parrish device, the shaft 12 is formed with an annular collar 26 and the end of the shaft 12 is provided with splines 24. The manufacture of this element as a one-piece member will be relatively costly, and if the collar 26 is manufactured as a separate member and attached by welding or similar means to the shaft 12, the costs rise since additional labor is needed, and attachment of the collar 26 to the shaft 12 would result in a possible failure point. Contrast this to the members of the invention at hand, where manufacture of all the elements is rather straightforward, and there are no likely failure points.

The independent claims 11 and 18 require a threaded shaft, a coupling member, anti-rotation means for the coupling member and shaft, a closed face steering wheel with a hub, anti-rotation means for the hub and coupling member, a shaft nut, and a tightening nut. As noted by

the Examiner, Parrish lacks a threaded shaft and a shaft nut. However, the Examiner's statement that it would be obvious to modify Parrish with the threaded shaft and nut structure of Broughton "to provide a fine adjustment between the steering wheel and the shaft" does not make engineering sense. In Parrish, the steering wheel is already coupled to the shaft by a threaded connection between the nut 30 and the threading 22 on the hub projection 18. Any "fine adjustments" between the wheel and the shaft would be accomplished between these two members, such as by putting a washer in between the nut 30 and the collar 26. Threading the end of shaft 12 in Parrish in place of the splines 24 would make the device unworkable, since it is splines 24 that prevent relative rotation between the shaft 12 and the hub 14. The splines 24 prevent relative rotation but do not secure the hub 14 to the shaft 12 in the axial direction - that is what nut 30 accomplishes in combination with the externally threaded hub 14. Furthermore, since the shaft 12 and splines 24 are a one-piece member, there would be nothing for a nut to join to the threaded end, and therefore threading the end of shaft 12 and providing a nut within bore 30 of the hub projection 18 would serve absolutely no purpose.

Applicant respectfully submits that all the claims as presented are patentable, on the basis of the above remarks, and reconsideration and subsequent passage for allowance is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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